

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE BOARD DIRECTION ON MAJOR ISSUES

Policy question(s): **WHAT PLANNING HORIZON SHOULD THE COUNTY USE?**

Policy options:

1. The state's Office of Financial Management develops a low, medium and high growth projection for the 20-year planning period. Our current Comprehensive Plan is based on the high growth projection of 1.75 percent each year to 2012. RCW 36.70A requires a 20-year planning horizon. Adoption of any changes that may result from the Plan review are currently anticipated in early 2002, making 2022 the 20-year horizon.
2. Alternatively, Clark County is not required to plan for a new 20-year horizon until 2003-4. This review could simply update the 2012 population projection and revisit comprehensive plan policies according to the process laid out under RCW36.70A.215, the "buildable lands" program.

Staff recommended: Adopt Option 1: use a 2022 planning horizon.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation

Board decision: Provide for a full 20-year planning horizon from the date of adoption.

Policy question(s): **WHAT POPULATION PROJECTION WILL BE USED?**

Policy options: The GMA requires that Clark County plan for a 20-year population level that falls into the range provided by the State Office of Financial Management (OFM). OFM has provided Clark County with an interim planning population projection for 2020 ranging from 419,188 on the low end to around 500,000 in the middle to 587,622 on the high end. These forecast numbers reflect growth rates between 1% on the low end to 2.5% on the high end. Historical population growth in Clark County has been over 3%. OFM will provide new preliminary population projections for initial review based on the year 2000 Census in July or August of 2001. Final Census-based projections are anticipated to be available in December 2001 or January 2002.

Staff recommended: OFM recommended the medium range as being the most likely scenario. Staff recommended a growth forecast somewhere between the medium and high projection, reflecting an annualized growth rate of 2.1%. Regardless of the planning horizon chosen, the current population figures should be updated to the most current available from OFM prior to conclusion of the comprehensive plan review.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation for using a 2.1% annualized growth rate.

Board decision: Adopt a 1.5% annualized growth rate.

Policy question(s): **WHAT EMPLOYMENT PROJECTION WILL BE USED?**

Policy options: The GMA does not mandate an employment projection that Clark County must plan for. Clark County has relied on Scott Bailey, regional labor economist for the Washington State Employment Securities Division, for an employment forecast that is tied to anticipated population growth. For this plan review, two scenarios has been developed: one with continued high levels of commuting to Oregon, and one which assumes that congestion will dampen this flow over time. The lower commuting scenario results in a higher job growth in Clark County.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended applying the lower commuting scenario methodology developed by Scott Bailey to the population level identified by the Board of County Commissioners.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation, but contingent on an implementation scheme.

Board decision: Adopt the lower commuting scenario with an implementation scheme

Policy question(s): **HOW SHOULD PROJECTED POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT BE ALLOCATED TO EACH JURISDICTION?**

Policy options:

- 1) In 1994 employment was allocated to UGA based on a jobs/population ratio.
- 2) For this review a two-step process is proposed: Begin the allocation by “building-out” vacant or underutilized land in each UGA using the GIS model and applying planning policy assumptions determined through the hearing process. Negotiate a final allocation among jurisdictions that addresses the balance of unallocated growth remaining once all identified land in existing UGAs reaches capacity.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended the two-step process in alternative 2.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation

Board decision: Adopt staff recommendation

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY CONTINUE TO PLAN FOR 19% OF NEW GROWTH TO BE IN RURAL AREAS AND 81% IN URBAN AREAS?**

Policy options: In 1994 the urban/rural population split was about 80/20. The adopted plan predicts that by 2012, 81 percent of the population would be inside urban growth areas and 19 percent would be outside.

- 1) Consider the population split a measurement tool, not a standard. This option provides the cities and county with information to determine whether, or when, plan policies should be amended to increase or decrease the development opportunities in the rural area.
- 2) Make an 81/19% split a clear goal to achieve. As a constant standard over time, the 19% population “standard” would drive changes to rural and resource designations that result in increasing the densities in the rural area, if the county continues to grow.
- 3) Adopt an assumed new split concurrent with a new population forecast.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended maintaining current policy—option 1. This provides the community with an ongoing measurement tool, the decision makers with a benchmark to make decisions, but does not dictate a change in land use designations if the “standard” isn’t met.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation as a guideline, not a hard policy. It was suggested the split be rechecked when the final population numbers are out.

Board decision: Adopt staff recommendation as a guideline, not a hard policy.

Policy question(s): **WHAT DENSITY IS APPROPRIATE FOR RURAL AREAS?**

Policy options:	<p>The Growth Management Act does not specify any definitive density threshold for rural areas. However, measures governing rural development are to ensure that rural development is contained, visual compatibility with the surrounding rural area is maintained, conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling low density development is precluded, critical areas are protected and conflicts with agricultural, forest and mineral resource lands are precluded. A minimum lot size of one dwelling unit per five acres was used in the 1994 Plan to accomplish these objectives. Larger lot sizes were also a part of the Plan to buffer resource lands and to ensure continuing opportunities for small-scale farming and forestry operations.</p> <p>Based on the examination of existing zoning, there are 13,577 buildable lots in the rural area (July, 2000 Plan Monitoring Report, page 51).</p> <p>Assuming 2.6 persons per household, overall additional rural capacity is approximately 35,300 persons at buildout.</p> <p>Assuming 3.0 persons per household, overall additional rural capacity is approximately 40,731 persons at buildout.</p>
Staff recommended:	Continue existing policy. Consider changes in land use in the rural area on a case by case basis within the framework of comprehensive plan policies and zoning regulations.
PC recommended:	Adopt staff recommendation.
Board decision:	Adopt staff recommendation.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD LAND USES INSIDE EXISTING RURAL CENTERS BE ALTERED?**

Policy options:	The Rural Centers Task Force has recommended minor changes to both existing rural center boundaries and land uses within the Meadow Glade and Brush Prairie Rural Centers. Neither of the proposed changes results in any significant change in rural carrying capacity. With regards to the boundary issue the task force is only recommending a change to the boundary of the Chelatchie Prairie rural center.
Staff recommended:	Support Rural Center Task Force recommendations
PC recommended:	Adopt staff recommendation.
Board decision:	Adopt staff recommendation.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY CONTINUE TO PURSUE AN URBAN DENSITY OF 6 UNITS PER ACRE IN SINGLE-FAMILY DISTRICTS AND 16 UNITS PER ACRE IN MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICTS?**

Policy options:	<p>The current planning assumption is that new construction should average 6 housing units per acre for single-family development and 16 units per acre for multi-family developments.</p> <p>See the 60/40 Housing Split Policy Question below. A range of housing split/density options is presented jointly there because of their close interrelationship.</p>
Staff recommended:	Staff recommended substituting a performance objective of 8 units per net acre overall for new construction for the 6/16 assumption
PC recommended:	There was support for using both a tiered approach and 8 units per net acre overall. There was no consensus on what densities should make up the tiers. There was support for 8.5/7/5, 8.5/6/4, 8/6/4, and 8/6.

Board decision: Replace the current density standards with the following density tiers: average eight (8) dwelling units per acre within the Vancouver urban growth area; six (6) units per acre within the Battle Ground, Camas, Ridgefield, and Washougal urban growth areas, and; four (4) units per acre within the LaCenter urban growth area. There is no standard for the Yacolt urban growth area due to sewer issues.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY ADOPT AN OVERALL, OR AVERAGE, DENSITY TARGET TO REPLACE THE SINGLE-FAMILY / MULTI-FAMILY GOALS AND DENSITY TARGETS?**

Policy options: See the 60/40 Housing Split Policy Question below. A range of housing split/density options is presented jointly there because of their close interrelationship.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended the 8 unit per net acre apply to each Urban Growth Area.

PC recommended: (see recommendation on previous question above)

Board decision: See discussions regarding urban density (above) and 60/40 ratios (below).

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY CONTINUE TO PLAN FOR 60% SINGLE-FAMILY AND 40% MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT? IF SO, SHOULD THAT REQUIREMENT BE FOR EACH URBAN GROWTH AREA OR FOR THE COUNTY AS A WHOLE?**

Policy options: The current policy states that new housing construction should be 40 percent multi-family (apartments, condominiums, etc.) and 60 percent single-family within each UGA. Following is a range of policy alternatives that could be considered relative to housing split and density issues:

- 1) Maintain the current 60/40 percent housing split and 6/16 single-family/multi-family density target with resultant net density of 8 units per acre.
- 2) Lower densities (e.g. 4/12) with an overall net density of 5.5 units per acre.
- 3) Retain Density of 6/16, and go to 75/25 SF/MF with overall density yield of 7.14 units per acre.
- 4) Establish a "tiered approach" to density based on the size of jurisdictions. The housing mix is 75/25 and a density target of 4/6/8 units per acre depending on the community size.
- 5) Eliminate the housing split and establish a density of 6 units per net acre in each urban growth area.
- 6) Eliminate 60/40 housing split and go to 8 units per acre average net density overall.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended option 6.

PC recommended: The Planning Commission agreed with staff on eliminating the 60/40 split, replacing it with tiered density requirements, but could not agree on the density targets.

Board decision: No more than 75% of new housing stock will be of a single product type (i.e., single-family detached residential). Does not apply to Yacolt due to sewer issues.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY REVISE POLICIES TO INFLUENCE AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING?**

Policy options:	The 60/40 housing split is an important land use tool to provide a range of housing choice and housing cost opportunities in the county. Several non-land use tools are also identified in the comprehensive plan. The current county goals and policies relating to housing affordability are detailed in the March 1, 2001 Staff Report (pages 3 and 8).
Staff recommended:	Staff recommended retaining goals 5.1 through 5.6 as currently written. Modify 5.7 (on page 8 of the Staff Report) and 5.7.1 on page 3) to be consistent with the housing split/density recommendations above. Strike reference to shifting the mix of housing in 5.7 and to a 60/40 housing ratio in 5.7.1.
PC recommended:	Adopt staff recommendation.
Board decision:	The Technical Advisory Committee is to investigate special needs housing, such as assisted living, and assure that Comprehensive Plans anticipate these needs and allow them to be pursued in all urban growth areas.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD URBAN GROWTH AREAS BE EXPANDED?**

Policy options: The current Clark County code indicates that boundaries are moved only if development has occurred on 75 percent of buildable residential or commercial land, or 50 percent of prime industrial land. This can be done once every five years during the plan review. The Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan provides additional guidance on how to address boundary changes.

Staff recommended: Staff recommended method follows current plan policies and county code: 1) Designate the total amount of land necessary to meet projected demands during the adopted planning period as Urban Reserve. When the primary "Trigger" (75%/50% land consumed) is reached for a specific urban area:

- a) The county responds only to a request from the affected City to consider such an expansion. The applicant City would prepare the necessary justification to support such an expansion:
- b) Such justification would include the environmental review, proposed land uses and capacity of those lands to accommodate those uses, a Capital Facilities Plan showing that the facilities needed are affordable (and at what level of service):

In addition, the county should be assured that the proposed urban reserve areas to be included in the Urban Area will be annexed concurrently or shortly after the Urban Growth Boundary is expanded.

PC recommended: Adopt staff recommendation.

Board decision: Expand urban growth areas as needed based on the broad policy direction contained herein. Retain the market factor (25% for residential, 50% for industrial). Revise household sizes to 2.66 persons per single-family household and 1.9 persons per multi-family household (formerly 2.3 and 1.8 respectively).

Policy question(s): **SHOULD ADDITIONAL INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL LANDS BE DESIGNATED? WHERE?**

Policy options: The current Clark County code indicates that boundaries are moved only if development has occurred on 75 percent of buildable residential or commercial land, or 50 percent of industrial land.

Staff recommended: Same as above.

PC recommended: (See recommendation above).

Board decision: Retain 75%/50% "trigger", Review secondary and tertiary lands. Promote economic development effort.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD URBAN RESERVE BOUNDARIES BE ADJUSTED?**

Policy options: One of the current criteria used to determine where and how much land should be added to the urban area says that the amendment shall be within an urban reserve or urban reserve overlay area. This can be done once every five years during the plan review.

Staff recommended: Same as above.

PC recommended: (See recommendation above).

Board decision: Urban reserve lands and other lands should be investigated through the EIS to determine the best areas for urban growth area expansion.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD THE COUNTY CONSIDER CHANGES TO URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES AT FIVE-YEAR INTERVALS OR ON SOME OTHER SCHEDULED?**

PC recommended: The Planning Commission had originally reviewed this issue on June 15, 2000, and validated on November 30, 2000, by a 5-0 vote that the changes made to the countywide planning Policy no. Chapter 1, Section 1.1 (f) should be revised as proposed to meet the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215 which called for completion of the first "Buildable Lands Capacity Report" by jurisdictions planning under the Growth Management Act by September 1, 2002.

Board decision: Complete the review and evaluation component of RCW 36.70A.215 every five years. Adopt new population and planning horizon at least every ten years, consistent with RCW 36.70A.130.

Policy question(s): **SHOULD DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS BE DEVELOPED FOR URBAN RESERVES TO ENSURE THAT INTERIM DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PRECLUDE EFFICIENT TRANSITION TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT?**

PC recommended: The Planning Commission, by a 5-0 vote, recommended that no new development regulations be adopted for urban reserve. The Planning Commission did comment, however, that it was desirable to better plan the urban reserve prior to the time they would need to be brought into the urban growth boundaries.

Board decision: See urban reserve discussion above.

Policy question(s): **HOW DO LAND USE PLANS IDENTIFY AND RESERVE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS FOR MEETING LONG-TERM NEEDS?**

PC recommended: The Planning Commission, by a 5-0 vote, recommended a new symbol be included on the arterial atlas to denote anticipated future (post twenty-year) transportation corridor needs.

Board decision: No symbol in arterial atlas.

The Board also agreed not to re-visit the Vacant Buildable Lands model and to retain the underutilized 2.5 acres or less sized parcels in the inventory.

MAY 24, 2001

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